

in S304. Then reception of a voice-data-box indication code is awaited during this five second duration in S305 and S306. When a voice-data-box indication code is received during the five second interval (S305:YES), then, as described above, whether or not the inputted voice-data-box indication code is valid is determined in S308. If the code is valid (S308:YES), then the content of the indicated voice data box is transmitted to the caller in S309. On the other hand, when the five second duration elapses (S306:YES), then the program returns to the start of operations performed directly before entering the voice-on-demand routine. That is, in the present embodiment, the voice-on-demand routine will not automatically end unless the caller hangs up. Accordingly, when no data exists in the indicated voice data box, this routine automatically returns to its start and restarts reproduction and transmission of the voice-on-demand guidance data 20, thereby enabling a caller to indicate and access another voice data box. This is because no password is required to access data in the voice data boxes of the voice-on-demand function.

According to the present invention, when the remote operation mode is selected, by performing operations at the remote device, a caller can access and retrieve data stored in memory of the facsimile machine 100 even under circumstances where reception of incoming image data is impossible, such as when recording paper runs out or when reception memory is full.

Regardless of whether the facsimile machine 100 is in a condition wherein reception of image data is impossible, a caller can retrieve confidential data which requires a password to access, nonconfidential data which requires no password to access, or both.

Regardless of whether the facsimile machine 100 is in a condition wherein reception of image data is impossible, a caller can use the mailbox function to retrieve voice data, image data, or both. That is, a caller can listen to the voice data of the mailbox using a telephone.

Regardless of whether the facsimile machine 100 is in a condition wherein reception of image data is impossible, a caller can use the data box function to retrieve voice data, image data, or both. That is, a caller can listen to the voice data of the data box using a telephone.

While the invention has been described in detail with reference to specific embodiments thereof, it would be apparent to those skilled in the art that various changes and modifications may be made therein without departing from the spirit of the invention, the scope of which is defined by the attached claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A facsimile machine provided with a remote operation mode enabling a caller from a remote device to access and retrieve data from the facsimile machine, the facsimile machine comprising:

a memory for storing the data to be accessed and retrieved by a caller during the remote operation mode;

switching means for turning on and off the remote operation mode;

facsimile reception determination means for determining which of a facsimile reception possible condition and a facsimile reception impossible condition that the facsimile machine is in; and

reception process means for performing, when the facsimile reception determination means determines that the facsimile machine is in a facsimile reception possible condition, reception of an incoming call regardless of whether the switching means has turned the

remote operation mode on or off and for performing reception of the incoming call when both the facsimile reception determination means determines that the facsimile machine is in a facsimile reception impossible condition and the switching means has turned the remote operation mode on.

2. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 1, wherein: the memory forms a plurality of mailboxes storing the data; and the remote operation mode includes a mailbox function wherein a caller from a remote device can indicate one of the plurality of mailboxes by using a mailbox indication code transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DTMF signal and then access and retrieve data from the indicated mailbox by using a password transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DTMF signal.

3. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 2, wherein: the memory forms a plurality of data boxes storing the data; and

the remote operation mode includes a data box function wherein a caller from a remote device can indicate, access, and retrieve data from one of the plurality of data boxes by using a data box indication code transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DTMF signal.

4. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 3, wherein the plurality of mailboxes are capable of storing at least one of image data and voice data.

5. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 3, wherein the plurality of data boxes are capable of storing at least one of image data and voice data.

6. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 2, wherein the plurality of mailboxes are capable of storing at least one of image data and voice data.

7. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 1, wherein: the memory forms a plurality of data boxes storing the data; and

the remote operation mode includes a data box function wherein a caller from a remote device can indicate, access, and retrieve data from one of the plurality of data boxes by using a data box indication code transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DTMF signal.

8. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 7, wherein the plurality of data boxes are capable of storing at least one of image data and voice data.

9. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 1, wherein the facsimile reception determination means detects presence and absence of recording sheets in the facsimile machine to determine which of the facsimile reception possible condition and the facsimile reception impossible condition that the facsimile machine is in.

10. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 9, further comprising a facsimile reception memory for storing image data of incoming facsimile transmissions, the facsimile reception determination means also detecting presence and absence of free memory to determine which of the facsimile reception possible condition and the facsimile reception impossible condition that the facsimile machine is in.

11. A facsimile machine provided with a remote operation mode enabling a caller from a remote device to access and retrieve data from the facsimile machine, the facsimile machine comprising:

a memory for storing the data to be accessed and retrieved by a caller during the remote operation mode; switching means for turning on and off the remote operation mode;

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facsimile reception determination means for determining which of a facsimile reception possible condition and a facsimile reception impossible condition that the facsimile machine is in; and

reception process means for performing, regardless of which of the facsimile reception possible condition and the facsimile reception impossible condition that the facsimile reception determination means determines that the facsimile machine is in, reception of an incoming call when the switching means has turned the remote operation mode on.

12. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 11, wherein: the memory forms a plurality of mailboxes storing the data; and

the remote operation mode includes a mailbox function wherein a caller from a remote device can indicate one of the plurality of mailboxes by using a mailbox

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indication code transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DIMP signal and then access and retrieve data from the indicated mailbox by using a password transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DIMP signal.

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13. A facsimile machine as claimed in claim 11, wherein: the memory forms a plurality of data boxes storing the data; and

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the remote operation mode includes a data box function wherein a caller from a remote device can indicate, access, and retrieve data from one of the plurality of data boxes by using a data box indication code transmitted from the remote device in the form of a DIMP signal.

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14. A communication device comprising:
reception determination means for determining whether the communication
device is in one of a reception possible condition and a reception impossible condition; and
reception process means for performing reception of an incoming call when
the reception determination means determines that the communication device is in the
reception possible condition, and for performing reception of the incoming call, regardless of
whether the communication device is in the reception impossible condition, when the
communication device is in a specific mode.

15. A communication device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the specific mode is
an answering machine mode.

16. A communication device as claimed in claim 14, wherein the reception
process means does not perform reception of the incoming call when the reception
determination means determines that the communication device is in a reception impossible
condition and the communication device is not in the specific mode.

17. A method for operating a communication device comprising:
determining whether the communication device is in one of a reception
possible condition and a reception impossible condition; and
performing reception of an incoming call when it is determined that the
communication device is in the reception possible condition, and for performing reception of
the incoming call, regardless of whether the communication device is in the reception
impossible condition, when the communication device is in a specific mode.

18. A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein the specific mode is an answering
machine mode.

19. A method as claimed in claim 17, wherein reception of the incoming call is not performed when it is determined that the communication device is in the reception impossible condition and the communication device is not in the specific mode.

20. A recording medium for controlling operation of a communication device, said recording medium including a control program that:

determines whether the communication device is in one of a reception possible condition and a reception impossible condition; and

controls the communication device to receive an incoming call when the communication device is determined to be in the reception condition, and controls the communication device to receive the incoming call, regardless of whether the communication device is in a reception impossible condition, when the communication device is in a specific mode.

21. A recording medium as claimed in claim 20, wherein the specific mode is an answering machine mode.

22. A recording medium as claimed in claim 20, wherein reception of the incoming call is not performed when it is determined that the communication device is in a reception impossible condition and the communication device is not in the specific mode.

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